

FRENCH INDO-CHINA

life, nor is the old custom retained of exempting soldiers' families from taxation. Natives show the greatest zeal in escaping this draft—about 5,000 recruits annually—and the village Notables are naturally anxious to palm off their worst elements. False identity papers, bribery, and desertions testify to its unpopularity. Well-to-do families can buy off their sons, but poor peasants have no recourse but to submit. Originally little was done to win the devotion of these unwilling recruits but with time indemnities and pensions were paid to the wounded and to bereaved families • leaves of absence, decorations, and promotions became more available. Annamites now form ninety-five per cent of the native army, and since the War are considered excellent military material. The necessity for saving French soldiers has benefited the status of the native soldiers. The French troops form one-third of the peace-time forces by the 1926 reform, and it is now possible for Annamites to become officers. Yenbay provoked another reform in a more careful selection and training of French officers. The communist policy of winning over the army is a trump card for those Annamites who ask for shorter service, higher pay, no foreign service, and rice fields for the families of drafted men.

Criticism of administrative policy does not confine itself to demanding redress from personal injustice and arbitrary decisions, but it extends among the intelligentsia to the state's public works programmes.

Nationalist leaders point to those suitable and necessary public works which have been left undone and which would enhance French prestige and revenues enormously. Waste, the lack of foresight, and poorly selected undertakings have pointlessly dispersed the unconsulted tax-

payers' money. The widening of an avenue in Hue
 caused the displacement of 6,000 tombs without indemnity to those
 whose religious beliefs had been violated and for whom there was no
 commensurate benefit. Waste has also characterized the numerous
 official "missions" which drain the budget. Taxpayers near starvation can
 hardly find it imperative to know that the Huong flute has six holes,
 whereas the Siamese has only two. Raynaud's visit cost Indo-China
 huge sums that could have been better expended fighting famine in
 North Annam. The Colonial Exposition of 1931 cost so many millions that
 the state never dared to publish the exact sum. Wanton extravagance
 rather than dishonesty has been the rule in Indo-China's
 expenditures—colonization's detractors to the contrary. There have been the
 monopolies, contracts, and the usual government graft, but the
 functionary corps has maintained a higher standard in integrity than
 ability. The native